

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I will be brief but I would like to comment. Senator Scofield, I empathize with what you are trying to do here and I think that the problems that you are trying to address are very serious problems, but I would have to echo what Senator Withem said a moment ago in that many cities, indeed, have excellent waste treatment facilities, and have taken care of some of these areas which you are outlining as being the areas that cities should concentrate on. And I guess the one thing that hasn't been mentioned here this afternoon is that it should be up to the individual cities to decide what their needs are. The idea of local control is often touted in this body, and in this case, I think it would be very appropriate because it would give the cities the ability to concentrate on what their problems really are. I think that an amendment of this nature is awfully late for the breadth of it and the importance of it to this bill. So I would encourage this body to defeat the Scofield amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Any other discussion on the Scofield amendment? Senator Scofield, excuse me, Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, just as I have been listening to the discussion, it seems to me that what I am hearing is different than what I heard before the session, which was a mechanism to do some bonding and take care of what I thought was traditionally infrastructure. Now it seems that the interest is just to provide funds to take care of local things whatever the community may decide upon, and it would seem to me the more appropriate mechanism for that is simply increase the state aid that goes to municipalities which is on a per capita basis anyway, the same distribution, rather than earmarking a portion of the income from the cigarette tax. It could be accomplished just as easily with a simple increase in state aid to municipalities which they then, of course, would be free to use it for whatever purpose, as it seems to be a concern of many members. And for that reason, it would seem appropriate to restrict this bonding authority to a few areas, and if it is to be enacted at all, then go ahead and consider just state aid to allow cities to do a variety of things they need to do.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Any other discussion? Senator Scofield, would you care to make a closing statement?